

Simsbury Fire District

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Connecticut General Assembly,
Committee on Public Safety and Security

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Distinguished Chairs, Representative Dargan, Senator Larson and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, I am Kevin Kowalski, Chief Administrative Officer and Fire Marshal of the Simsbury Fire District which encompasses the entire town.

I am here today to testify against H.B. 6970 'AAC Emergency Service Personnel'. The Simsbury Fire District has concern with H.B. 6970, due to its removal of funding to community and local emergency dispatch centers (with populations under 40,000) that provide essential life saving services if they do not regionalize by the year 2020.

After three lengthy and thorough studies over the past ten years on the merits of regionalizing, the district has found the best service for our community is operating our own Public Service Answering Point (PSAP).

The new bill (H.B. 6790), if adopted would require any community to form centers that would serve three towns or more and over 40,000 people. It is my belief that small towns (those with populations under 10,000) may find that there are widespread benefits in joining together with other small-populated areas but not for those over that number.

As you know there are many functions that a Dispatch center does, In smaller communities like ours they assist walk-in customers, and also monitor activities in

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the Police Stations, even including "lock-up". Furthermore, Dispatch Centers and those working within them, also function as administrators, completing the various ancillary roles many people overlook, such as accounting and secretarial duties.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak here today.

Kevin Kowalski,
Fire Marshal, Simsbury Fire District